



SCDDSN NEWSLETTER MARCH 2010

WELCOME! I hope you each take the time to review this first of many editions of the DDSN Newsletter. I look forward to receiving input from you on ways to improve the Newsletter, information you would like for me to publish in the Newsletter which can then be shared among Advocates, Provider Networks, and this office, as well as submitting stories of all the positive things you are doing throughout the State. Feel free to either email me at Nhall@ddsn.sc.gov or call my office at 803-898-9650.

Dates to Know:

♦ **South Carolina Assistive Technology Expo** 2010-March 18th-9am-4pm at Marriott Spartanburg. Visit the website by going to: [South Carolina Assistive Technology Expo 2010](http://SouthCarolinaAssistiveTechnologyExpo2010.org)

♦ **Family Connection Conference "Of Hopes and Dreams"** March 19th and 20th at Gateway Baptist Church in Irmo, SC-For more information call locally at 803-252-0914 or toll free at 800-578-8750 or visit their website: www.familyconnectionsc.org/annual_conference/

◇ **Disabilities Solutions 11th Annual “Pathways to Independence” Conference** March 20 and 21st at Springmaid Beach Resort in Myrtle Beach, SC. Contact them at 1-866-450-3848 or email them at Pathways2010@aol.com for further information.

◇ **EdVenture’s Open House for Children with Disabilities**-March 20th from 5-7pm. Admission is free for children with disabilities and their family members. Call 803-779-3100 for further information. For further information visit the website at [Open House for Children with Disabilities](#)

◇ **2010 SC Youth Leadership Forum** for students with disabilities from ages 17-21 (as of 12/31/09)-Newberry College July 14th-16th. For further information call them at 803-896-6574 or visit their website at <http://www.scvrd.net/yf>

◇ **A Guide to Special Education Advocacy** sponsored by Pro-Parents of South Carolina-to be held at Glenforest School in West Columbia, SC -April 19th from 8:30am-4:00pm-for further information visit their website at www.proparents.org or call 803-772-5688 locally or toll free at 800-759-4776

◇ There will be a **Special Needs Air show at Shaw Air Force Base** on Friday, May 7th from 11:30-4:00pm. They will have airmen in attendance to assist with a hand in hand tour of all the different aircraft as well as having aerial demonstrations. Please note that I will be sending you further details for this event as I receive them from the Base Lieutenant. They state they hope to have a large crowd for this special event.

DID YOU KNOW?

△ **The Leadership Aiken County Class of 2009-2010** is raising funds to build a barrier free playground to include children with special needs in Aiken, South Carolina. Their next fundraiser is Bocce Tournament Night at Aiken’s Whitney Polo Field April 17th from 10am-2pm. For further information visit their website at: <http://www.aikenplayground.org/>

△ **Healing Farm Ministries in Mt. Pleasant, SC** is introducing 2010 Community Nights the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 6:00-8:00pm beginning April 14th. They will have a meal and fellowship time. For further information please visit their website at: <http://www.healingfarm.org/> or call them at 843-971-9300.

△ **COLLEGE TRANSITION CONNECTION** works with select colleges and universities in South Carolina to design, create, and fund transition and post-secondary opportunities

for young adults with intellectual disabilities. Clemson University, The University of South Carolina, Coastal Carolina University, Winthrop University, and the College of Charleston participate in this program. The organization is funded through a grant. Mr. Donald Bailey, Chairman, invites you to visit their website where you can find information on how this program is impacting the participants in this program throughout the state. To find out more visit their website at:
<http://www.collegetransitionconnection.org/>

DDSN'S WEBSITE

The South Carolina Department of Disabilities and Special Needs Website is: <http://ddsn.sc.gov>. You can find information such as Directives, Standards, Memos from the Director, and numerous other items which will be helpful in learning information about our agency.

The Commission meeting minutes can be obtained by going to the site as well as the dates for the scheduled Commission Meetings.

Did you know that you can access the training calendar by going to the quick link "[About DDSN](#)" and opening the tab on the left for training calendar?

Each newsletter will feature information that you may find helpful for accessing this site. We continue to work towards improving our site for easy access in locating the information you may need. We welcome any suggestions you have for improving our Website.

From the State Director

Welcome to the first issue of DDSN's newsletter. I have been in this position for about four and a half months now; it has definitely not been a slow time! Even though it has honestly been a challenging four months, it has also been very personally exciting for me. During this short time I have met so many wonderful new people; consumers, families, advocates, providers, central office staff, Commission members, as well as many others. Thank you to everyone who has sent me well wishes on my new position. I have been fortunate in that I have been able to travel to meet with or tour several of the Boards or providers across the state. However, there are many more than I have not had the opportunity to visit. As you all know, we are in a critical budget time and I must spend a great deal of my time at the State House assisting in advocating for DDSN's budget for next year. I look forward to continuing to work with the DDSN consumers, families, advocates, providers, staff, Commission members, as well as members of the General Assembly, to lead this agency through what has been frequently described as one of the most challenging economic times in South Carolina's history. I trust that we will all work together to ensure that we continue to provide the best possible services to the people across our state. If I have not been to your Board or provider organization yet, please trust that I will come. I want to personally visit each provider across this state and see for myself all the good work and services that are provided in South Carolina.

This is only the first edition of the newsletter, which is a combined edition. Eventually we want to have two targeted versions; one for providers and one for consumers, families and advocates. Due to cost concerns, we will only be publishing the newsletters electronically. We will develop electronic mailing lists for anyone who is interested in receiving each edition. If you are interested in receiving the newsletters, please contact Ms. Nancy Hall, Communications Liaison, at nhall@ddsn.sc.gov or 803-898-9650. We will also be posting each edition on the DDSN website. Due to cost considerations, we will not be able to mail the newsletters. Hard copies will be available at the DDSN Central Office and local boards and providers may be able to provide a copy to anyone who is interested without computer access.

As I hope the previous four months have demonstrated, I believe in open communication. This newsletter is a single additional step in that direction. We hope to use this to communicate positive information and stories as well to clear up potential confusions within the DDSN system. I will continue to send out communications on time sensitive issues such as budget updates in between newsletter editions. This newsletter is a little bit of a work in progress, so if you have suggestions or topics that you think would be good to discuss, please contact Nancy Hall or mention it to me.

I look forward to continuing to get to know everyone a little bit better and working within the DDSN system.

Beverly A.H. Buscemi, PhD